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Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Letter dated 1 July 2004 from the President of the General Assembly addressed to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 28 June 2004 from the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions regarding its report on the requests for exception under Article 19 from Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, the Niger, the Republic of Moldova, Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia and Tajikistan for appropriate action by the Fifth Committee.

(*Signed*) Julian R. **Hunte**

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Annex

Letter dated 28 June 2004 from the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to refer to rule 160 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which provides that the Committee on Contributions shall advise the Assembly with regard to the application of Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations. I also have the honour to refer to requests for exemption under Article 19 from Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, the Niger, the Republic of Moldova, Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia and Tajikistan, which you and the Acting President transmitted to me for appropriate action by the Committee.

In connection with those requests, the Committee has asked me to transmit to the General Assembly without delay the section of its report on its sixty-fourth session dealing with those questions so as to facilitate early action by the Assembly. This is attached.

(*Signed*) Ugo **Sessi**
Chairman
Committee on Contributions

Attachment

Sections of the report of the Committee on Contributions on its sixty-fourth session regarding requests for exemption under Article 19 of the Charter*

Application of Article 19 of the Charter

33. The Committee recalled its general mandate, under rule 160 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, to advise the General Assembly on the action to be taken with regard to the application of Article 19 of the Charter. It also recalled the Assembly's decisions in its resolution 54/237 C concerning procedures for consideration of requests for exemption under Article 19 and the results of its own recent consideration of this subject.[1]

Requests for exemption under Article 19

34. The Committee recalled that, in its resolution 54/237 C, the General Assembly, inter alia, urged all Member States in arrears requesting exemption under Article 19 to provide the fullest possible supporting information, including information on economic aggregates, government revenues and expenditure, foreign exchange resources, indebtedness, difficulties in meeting domestic or international financial obligations and any other information that might support the claim that failure to make necessary payments were due to conditions beyond the control of the Member States. The Assembly also decided that requests for exemption under Article 19 must be submitted by Member States to the President of the General Assembly at least two weeks before the session of the Committee so as to ensure a complete review of the requests.

35. The Committee noted that, on the basis of the latter provision, the deadline for receipt of requests for exemption under Article 19 by the President of the General Assembly was 24 May 2004 for consideration by the Committee at its sixty-fourth session. It also noted that an announcement to that effect was included in the *Journal of the United Nations* from 1 March to 24 May 2004. Ten requests for exemption under Article 19 were received by the time specified in the resolution. This compares with 9 received within the specified time frame in 2003, 7 in 2002, 3 in 2001, 7 in 2000 and 11 in 1999.

36. In considering the requests, the Committee had before it information provided by the 10 Member States concerned and the Secretariat. It also met with representatives of the Member States, the African Union and relevant units of the Secretariat.

37. **The Committee noted that the nature and quality of the information provided by Member States requesting exemptions under Article 19 varied widely, with some providing little, if any, information to support their request. In this context, the Committee recalled the provisions of General Assembly resolution 54/237 C and urged all Member States requesting exemptions under Article 19 to submit as much information as possible in support of their**

* The full report of the Committee will be issued as *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 11* (A/59/11).

requests. It also requested the Secretariat to seek to provide as much detailed additional information as possible on the situation of those Member States.

38. **The Committee recalled its conclusions and recommendations concerning multi-year payment plans. The Committee also noted that four of the Member States requesting exemption under Article 19 had presented multi-year payment plans for the payment of their arrears. The Committee encouraged all Member States requesting an exemption under Article 19 to consider, when possible, submission of a multi-year payment plan.**

39. **In order to ensure that the Committee's conclusions and recommendations are available to the General Assembly as soon as possible and in accordance with its past practice, the Committee authorized its Chairman to convey to the General Assembly without delay the related section of its report.**

1. Burundi

40. The Committee had before it the text of a letter dated 20 April 2004 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, transmitting a letter dated 15 April 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly. It also heard an oral representation by the Permanent Representative of Burundi.

41. In its written and oral representations, Burundi indicated that its socio-economic situation remained very serious. The years of war had led to a major reduction of its gross domestic product (GDP) and there were high rates of extreme poverty and of external indebtedness. Export earnings from coffee were down due to the impact of the conflict on production and lower international prices. While the security and political situation had improved, implementation of the agreements reached would require significant resources. Resources were also required for the disarmament process and the country was facing a number of strikes, including in the education sector. While efforts had been made to secure international assistance and pledges had been made, little had so far been forthcoming.

42. Despite these serious problems, the Government of Burundi, which is strongly attached to the ideals of the United Nations, had made a special effort to meet its financial obligations to the United Nations. It had been advised, however, that it would need to make a payment of approximately $14,100 to avoid the application of Article 19 in 2005. As it had in the past, the Government would make every effort to pay this amount. Given its circumstances, however, it was not sure that this would be possible. Accordingly, it was requesting an exemption under Article 19 should it be unable to make the necessary payment before 2005.

43. The Committee was provided with information by the Secretariat concerning the significant progress made in the peace process in Burundi. It also noted that the Security Council had authorized a new peacekeeping operation to assist the process, building on the earlier work of the United Nations political mission and of the African Union. Elections were scheduled to be held before the end of 2004 and international assistance would be needed for this and for the process of disarmament, demobilization and reconstruction. Earlier fighting had led to large-scale displacement of the population, with many thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons. The security situation was now significantly better,

although there had recently been some fighting around Bujumbura, and efforts were under way for repatriation and resettlement of those affected. The internal conflict had seriously disrupted public services, including education and health, and there were concerns about the capacity to meet the needs of returning Burundians. Efforts to mobilize international assistance for Burundi had had only limited success. The consolidated appeal last year for over $100 million had only raised about $17 million so far and pledges of over $1 billion made at a meeting earlier this year in Brussels had not yet resulted in substantial disbursements.

44. **The Committee recognized with great appreciation the considerable efforts that Burundi continued to make to meet its financial obligations to the United Nations despite the serious and continuing challenges that it faced.**

45. **The Committee recalled that Article 19 provided that the General Assembly may permit a Member subject to the provisions of Article 19 to vote if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member. In that context, the Committee noted that Burundi did not in fact fall under the provisions of Article 19 in 2004. Accordingly, it concluded that no action was required by the General Assembly.**

2. Central African Republic

46. The Committee had before it the text of a letter dated 24 May 2004 from the Acting President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, transmitting a letter dated 24 May 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Central African Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly. It also heard an oral representation by the Permanent Representative of the Central African Republic.

47. In its written and oral representations, the Central African Republic outlined the severe economic and social problems facing the country. The economy had not benefited during the post-conflict period and continuing internal security problems discouraged foreign aid and investment and hence the country's recovery and development. Most of the population was in extreme poverty and a large number had been infected with HIV/AIDS. Despite courageous initiatives by the Government to stabilize public finances, regulate the exploitation of natural resources, reduce official salaries and bring public expenditure under control, among other measures, there had been few results so far. The current lack of cooperative projects with international financial institutions also complicated the prospects for aid from the international community. In spite of these circumstances, the Government is aware of its obligations to the United Nations and a long-term calendar of payments is being drawn up by the Finance and Budget Ministry and should be announced soon.

48. The Committee was provided with information by the Secretariat. The Central African Republic had serious problems of governance, with corruption and tax evasion. As a result, government revenues were weak and the prospects for support from the Bretton Woods institutions seemed poor. Current conditions threatened a major humanitarian crisis. Agriculture had suffered from bad weather conditions for several years and internal security problems hampered efforts towards development. In addition, the health system had largely broken down and patients had to pay for their own medication, putting effective treatment out of the reach of many. This was taking place at a time when malnutrition and HIV/AIDS were prevalent. A

consolidated appeal for $17 million had been launched in November 2003 but little had so far been received.

49. Some members considered that the continuing economic, social and security problems facing the Central African Republic meant that its failure to pay the minimum amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 was clearly due to conditions beyond its control. Other members had doubts, particularly as to whether this was the case with respect to the country's continued failure to make any payment of its assessed contributions.

50. The Committee recalled that, at its sixty-third session, it had welcomed the intention of the Central African Republic to submit a schedule for the payment of its arrears and urged it to make some payments in future so as to reduce, or at least avoid an increase of, its arrears. The Committee noted that the schedule of payments mentioned in the last submission of the Central African Republic had not yet been received but that it was being drawn up and should be announced soon. It looked forward to reviewing the schedule at its next session. The Committee also noted that the Central African Republic had still made no payments since 1994, apart from a payment of $513,567 in 1998.

51. Based on the information provided, the Committee concluded on balance that the failure of the Central African Republic to pay the minimum amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 was due to conditions beyond its control. It therefore recommended that the Central African Republic be permitted to vote until 30 June 2005. The Committee once again urged the Central African Republic to make some payments in future so as to reduce, or at least avoid an increase of, its unpaid assessed contributions.

3. Comoros

52. The Committee had before it the text of a letter dated 21 May 2004 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, transmitting a letter dated 17 May 2004 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Comoros to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly. It also heard an oral representation by a representative of the Comoros.

53. In its written and oral representations, the Comoros recalled the prolonged political and constitutional crisis that had devastated its economic, social and political situation. National reconciliation had culminated in the election of a new Comorian parliament in April and election by the parliament of a president. The process had been costly and had strained the Government's limited resources. As a result the Comoros had not been able to pay its contributions to the United Nations or other international organizations. The new parliament would be taking up the issue of the payment of the country's arrears, possibly through submission of a payments schedule, and the representative of the Comoros indicated his expectation that it would not be necessary to ask for another exemption under Article 19 in the future.

54. The Committee was provided with information by the Secretariat concerning the distinct improvement in the political situation in the Comoros, with clear signs of national reconciliation. At the same time, it noted the continuing fragility of the situation in the light of the country's recent history. It also noted the country's continuing economic problems. With high population density and growth, recent

negative economic growth had led to impoverishment of the people. Outside assistance would be important for some time. In that context, an anti-poverty strategy document had been agreed with UNDP and discussions were proceeding with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). If an agreement could be reached with the Bretton Woods institutions, this should encourage others to provide assistance through a donors' conference.

55. Some members considered that, despite recent positive constitutional and political developments, the fragility of the situation in the Comoros and its continuing economic and social problems meant that its failure to pay the minimum amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 was clearly due to conditions beyond its control. Other members felt that, while the Comoros might have difficulty in paying the necessary minimum amount of over $700,000, it could at least have paid the amount of approximately $17,000 necessary to avoid a further increase of its arrears. They questioned the commitment of the Comoros to meeting its financial obligations to the United Nations and recalled that the last payment it had made, in 2001, had come after the Committee's sixtieth session, when it did not agree to recommend an exemption under Article 19 for the Comoros.

56. The Committee recalled that, in recommending an exemption under Article 19 at its last session, it had urged the Comoros to pay particular attention to its arrears to the United Nations and to make an additional effort to make some payment of its assessed contributions so as to reduce, or at least avoid a further increase of, its arrears. The Committee had agreed to review any further requests from the Comoros in the light of its payment record. The Committee noted that in the meantime no payments had been made by the Comoros. The Committee also recalled that, in its resolution 58/1 A, the General Assembly had agreed that the failure of the Comoros to pay the minimum amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 was due to conditions beyond its control, while noting the Committee's observations.

57. The Committee noted the information provided by the representative of the Comoros that a committee of the newly elected parliament was considering the question of the arrears of the Comoros with a view to meeting its obligations and his expectation that this would be the last request from his Government for an exemption under Article 19.

58. In the light of the foregoing, and notwithstanding serious reservations about the payment record of the Comoros, the Committee understood that the Comoros would not be able to pay the full amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 before 31 December 2004. It therefore recommended that the Comoros be permitted to vote until 30 June 2005, based on the information provided by the representative of the Comoros that the Comoros will not request another exemption under Article 19 without making payments to start reducing its outstanding assessed contributions to the United Nations. The Committee encouraged the Comoros to consider presenting a multi-year payment plan as a way of gradually reducing its outstanding assessed contributions to the Organization.

4. Guinea-Bissau

59. The Committee had before it the text of a letter dated 16 April 2004 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Committee on

Contributions, transmitting a letter dated 6 April 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly. It also heard an oral representation by a representative of Guinea-Bissau.

60. In its written and oral representations, Guinea-Bissau recalled the political problems that it had faced since 1998. After a civil war, coup d'état and elections, there had been another coup d'état in 2003. Following the resignation of the former president, a transitional interim president was named, legislative elections were held in March 2004 and a presidential election is due to take place next year. The political instability exacerbated the country's underlying economic and social problems and the Government lacks the financial means to meet the most basic needs of the population, such as health and education. In that context, many civil servants have not been paid for months and schools were closed since teachers could not be paid. Notwithstanding these problems, the Government remains committed to paying its contributions to the United Nations and is keeping the possibility of submitting a multi-year payments plan under continuous consideration as the situation normalizes.

61. The Committee was provided with information by the Secretariat concerning the improvements in the country's situation since last year. Following the coup d'état last year and the resignation of the president, national agreement on a political transition was reached with the assistance of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries. The legislative elections held in March 2004 were judged to be free and fair by international observers and a presidential election is scheduled for March 2005. Despite this progress, the country faces many serious economic and social problems. International assistance in tackling these problems will be needed and a special fund was created, administered by UNDP. Of the $18 million called for in an emergency economic plan, $4 million has so far been received. This had permitted payment of part of the salaries owed to civil servants. For the longer term, it was hoped to convene a round-table conference by the end of this year to raise international support. It was noted that the lack of a banking system was a problem for potential private investment but that some oil exploration activities had begun.

62. **The Committee concluded that the failure of Guinea-Bissau to pay the minimum amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 was due to conditions beyond its control. It therefore recommended that Guinea-Bissau be permitted to vote until 30 June 2005.**

63. **The Committee noted that, between 1995 and 1997, Guinea-Bissau had steadily reduced its arrears but that since that time, its arrears had increased. The Committee urged Guinea-Bissau to resume making payments so as to once again reduce its arrears. In that context, the Committee noted the intention of Guinea-Bissau to establish a multi-year payment plan and encouraged it to submit such a plan as soon as possible.**

5. Iraq

64. The Committee had before it the text of a letter dated 13 May 2004 from the Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions. It also had before it the text of a letter dated 14 May 2004 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, transmitting a letter dated 11 May

2004 from the Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly. It also heard an oral representation by a representative of Iraq.

65. In its written and oral representations, Iraq pointed to the devastation wrought by more than two decades of war and the effects of a decade of international sanctions. In addition to the human cost, there had been immense destruction of the country's infrastructure, with destruction of water, desalination and sewage plants and electricity, roads and schools. As a result, living standards had fallen sharply and there was a very high level of unemployment. Although Iraq has enormous potential, with large oil reserves, hydroelectric potential and a skilled population, the immediate problems of reconstruction were vast. In addition the country had been saddled by the previous regime with external debts of approximately $120 billion. In the light of the current situation, Iraq was not in a position to pay what it owed to the United Nations, although it hoped to do so next year, when oil production had increased.

66. The Committee was provided with information by the Secretariat concerning the scale of the problems facing Iraq following decades of war and international sanctions. Although resources were being mobilized and reconstruction efforts were under way, the task was enormous and the process was hampered by the security situation. At the same time, there was great natural and human potential and progress on both fronts should be mutually reinforcing. The Committee also noted the political transition currently under way, with the establishment of an interim government, followed by elections no later than January 2005 leading, after a transitional process, to a constitutionally elected government by the end of 2005.

67. **The Committee recognized the exceptional problems faced by Iraq and the complex transitional process under way and concluded that the failure of Iraq to pay the minimum amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 was due to conditions beyond its control. It therefore recommended that Iraq be permitted to vote until 30 June 2005.**

68. **The Committee welcomed the indication of Iraq's commitment to meet its financial obligations to the United Nations and encouraged it to endeavour to resume payments at the earliest opportunity and to consider presenting a multi-year payment plan as a way of gradually reducing its outstanding assessed contributions to the Organization.**

6. Niger

69. The Committee had before it the text of a letter dated 24 May 2004 from the Acting President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, transmitting a letter dated 21 May 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly. It also heard an oral representation by a representative of the Niger.

70. In its written and oral representations, the Niger recalled that it was one of the least developed countries and poverty was a major problem. It had also had internal difficulties, including a coup d'état. Democracy had been restored in 1999 but some of the Niger's very limited resources had to be applied to the conduct of elections and to national reconciliation and conflict prevention. Government resources were

stretched and arrears of payments were outstanding for pensions, salaries and scholarships. The Niger was committed to meeting its financial obligations to the United Nations, had submitted a schedule of payments and had made a payment of over $27,000. It was also an active participant in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

71. The Committee was provided with information by the Secretariat concerning the process of democratization in the Niger, which was proceeding on schedule. The country had a population growth rate of about 3 per cent and, despite some progress, it was difficult to reduce poverty significantly. In that effort, the Niger was heavily dependent on foreign assistance. While significant pledges had been made, it remained to be seen what the level of disbursements would be.

72. Some members considered that the Niger's circumstances as a highly indebted least developed country meant that its failure to pay the minimum amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 was clearly due to conditions beyond its control. Other members had doubts and noted that no payments had been made from 1999 to 2003. They did, however, welcome the indication that a payment was being made in 2004.

73. **The Committee welcomed the fact that the Niger had submitted a multi-year payment plan as a way of reducing its arrears to the United Nations. It also welcomed confirmation of the receipt of the first payment under that plan.**

74. **Based on the foregoing, the Committee concluded that the failure of the Niger to pay the minimum amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 was due to conditions beyond its control. It therefore recommended that the Niger be permitted to vote until 30 June 2005.**

7. Republic of Moldova

75. The Committee had before it the text of a letter dated 21 May 2004 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, transmitting a letter dated 20 May 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly. It also heard an oral representation by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova.

76. In its written and oral representations, the Republic of Moldova indicated that, in spite of some recent economic progress, it still faced serious challenges. Its economy had still not recovered to pre-1990 levels and it had one of the lowest levels of per capita income in Europe. Although it was trying to resolve the internal conflict in the eastern region, that area, which accounted for 45 per cent of the industrial potential, was not under the Government's control. In addition, the unresolved conflict was damaging to trade and, through smuggling, had a negative impact on government revenues. The Republic of Moldova is a heavily indebted low income country and it was working to resolve issues outstanding with the international financial institutions. As a result of this situation, the Republic of Moldova was currently not able to pay its outstanding assessed contributions to the United Nations in full. It remained committed to meeting its financial obligation to the Organization, however, and was continuing to honour the payment schedule that it submitted in 2001.

77. The Committee was provided with information by the Secretariat concerning the continuing serious problems faced by the Republic of Moldova, including the separatist problem in the Trans-Dniester region. Despite recent progress, the Republic of Moldova was one of the poorest countries in Europe. The Government's budget had increased significantly, with a 23 per cent increase in pensions, and IMF had suspended its programme in 2003.

78. **The Committee noted with appreciation that, despite its continuing problems, the Republic of Moldova had fulfilled the commitments that it made under the plan that it submitted in 2001 and that it had more than met the payments scheduled for 2001-2003 and had made an initial payment in 2004.**

79. **The Committee concluded that the failure of the Republic of Moldova to pay the minimum amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 was due to conditions beyond its control. It therefore recommended that the Republic of Moldova be permitted to vote until 30 June 2005.**

8. Sao Tome and Principe

80. The Committee had before it the text of a letter dated 21 May 2004 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, transmitting a letter dated 20 May 2004 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Sao Tome and Principe to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly. It also heard an oral representation by a representative of Sao Tome and Principe.

81. In its written and oral representations, Sao Tome and Principe pointed to its continuing economic problems. It was currently dependent on production of a few commodities, including cocoa, whose world price had fallen while import prices had gone up. Poverty was a major problem and unemployment remained high. The country's external debt of $364 million was 19 times its export earnings. While prospective oil exploration held considerable promise, only one of nine blocks had been allocated so far and no oil revenues had yet been received. Sao Tome and Principe recalled that, prior to the lowering of the minimum rate of assessment in 1998, it had been the most overassessed Member State. It was nevertheless committed to meeting its financial obligations to the Organization, when it was able to do so.

82. The Committee was provided with information by the Secretariat concerning the situation in Sao Tome and Principe. A coup d'état last year had been reversed quickly and the political situation had improved. Efforts for national reconciliation were continuing but the situation remained fragile. The current economic position was also very difficult. While there were high hopes for oil revenue in the future, immediate prospects were uncertain and substantial amounts were unlikely before 2006-2010. A meeting of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries in July 2004 will consider budgetary issues.

83. Some members felt that the country's continuing economic problems fully justified the conclusion that the failure of Sao Tome and Principe to pay the minimum amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 was due to conditions beyond its control. While the situation might change if oil revenues were forthcoming, this was unlikely to happen for some time. Other members were not convinced that Sao Tome and Principe could not pay at least part of its arrears, given

its expected revenues in 2004. They noted that one estimate of the signature bond that should be paid this year on the exploration block that had been allocated was $70 million. While this was not certain, they noted that the total outstanding assessed contributions of Sao Tome and Principe to the United Nations were less than 1 per cent of this amount.

84. **The Committee noted with concern that Sao Tome and Principe had failed to make the payment scheduled for 2003 in the multi-year payment plan that it submitted in 2002 and had made no payments so far in 2004. The Committee urged it to resume the payments provided for in its multi-year payment plan so as to reduce its arrears to the United Nations.**

85. **Having considered the information provided, the Committee concluded on balance that the failure of Sao Tome and Principe to pay the minimum amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 was due to conditions beyond its control. It therefore recommended that Sao Tome and Principe be permitted to vote until 30 June 2005.**

9. Somalia

86. The Committee had before it the text of a letter dated 24 May 2004 from the Acting President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, transmitting a letter dated 21 May 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Somalia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly. It also heard an oral representation by the Permanent Representative of Somalia.

87. In its written and oral representations, Somalia referred to the devastating impact of the civil war that had raged since 1991. There had been no government until 2001, with the establishment of the Transitional National Government. Political and security problems continued, however, with attacks by warlords. A peace conference is under way in Nairobi, with the goal of elections and a new national government. In addition to the political problems facing the country, drought had adversely affected livestock exports, as had restrictions imposed by some importing countries. In addition, the freezing of the assets of the major banking institution had impeded remittances and economic activity. Somalia recognized its international obligations and, once a government of national unity was formed, it would consider how to deal with those obligations.

88. The Committee was provided with information by the Secretariat concerning the serious consequences of the continuing conflict in Somalia. The Transitional National Government, whose earlier agreed mandate only ran to August 2003, controlled only part of Mogadishu. Separate administrations exercised some control over "Somaliland" and "Puntland" and other areas were controlled by warlords. Talks are continuing in Kenya, which is pressing for completion of the process. In the meantime, the security situation is adversely affecting the delivery of assistance to the Somali people.

89. **The Committee concluded that the failure of Somalia to pay the minimum amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 was due to conditions beyond its control. It therefore recommended that Somalia be permitted to vote until 30 June 2005.**

10. Tajikistan

90. The Committee had before it the text of a letter dated 5 April 2004 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, transmitting a letter dated 1 April 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations transmitting a letter dated 10 March 2004 from the Prime Minister of Tajikistan addressed to the President of the General Assembly. It also heard an oral representation by the Permanent Representative of Tajikistan.

91. In its written and oral representations, Tajikistan indicated that, following the peace agreement in 1998-1999, parliamentary elections had been held and there was now greater political stability. There had also been economic progress in the last few years but 80 per cent of the population was still below the poverty line. It was also recalled that the country was landlocked and many areas were inaccessible. It had also suffered from a number of natural disasters and a high level of external debt. Despite these problems, Tajikistan was committed to meeting its financial obligations to the United Nations and was making every effort to reduce its arrears to the Organization.

92. The Committee was provided with information by the Secretariat concerning the situation in Tajikistan. While there had been some economic progress, Tajikistan still faced severe economic and social problems. Forty per cent of government revenue went to service debt and this limited the amount available for pressing needs of the population. As a landlocked country, Tajikistan faced higher import costs and instability in neighbouring areas has also had an adverse impact, including border closures.

93. **The Committee noted with appreciation that, despite its continuing difficulties, Tajikistan had fulfilled the commitments that it had made under the plan that it submitted in 2000 and that its payments during 2000-2004 exceeded those scheduled in the plan. Based on the information provided, the Committee concluded that the failure of Tajikistan to pay the minimum amount necessary to avoid the application of Article 19 was due to conditions beyond its control. It therefore recommended that Tajikistan be permitted to vote until 30 June 2005.**

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 11* (A/55/11), chap. IV.B; ibid., *Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 11* (A/56/11), chap. III.B; ibid., *Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 11* (A/57/11), chap. V; and ibid., *Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 11* (A/58/11), chap. V.